

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0038] with the following amended paragraph (in which deleted matter is shown with strikethrough text (e.g., ~~strikethrough~~) and in which added matter is shown underlined):

[0038] After the target profile is retrieved (from block 204) or generated (from block 205), operation proceeds to next decision block 206 in which it is queried whether the source is known. If the source is known, then operation proceeds to block 207 in which the stored source profile is retrieved from the repository 119. If the source is not known, operation proceeds instead to block 208 in which the source image/disk 113 is inspected to determine the drivers and settings of the source system or the source image. The inspection process includes review of the registry, drivers, configuration files etc., and the results of the inspection process are stored in the source profile 131. The source inspection may be skipped if the source is itself a neutral image. After the source profile is retrieved (from block 207) or generated (from block 208), operation proceeds to next block 209 in which the profiles 123 and 131 are compared to analyze the results of the target profiles and source inspection. The comparison process may employ rules from the rules library 121, and/or may conduct a side-by-side comparison and analysis of ~~register~~ registry, drivers, configuration files, etc. At next block 210, a simulation of running hardware and/or software installations on the target system is performed using existing INF files or similar installer scripts. The simulation detects changes to registry, configuration files, drivers, etc., that are needed on the target hardware, and determines the modifications needed to make it appear as though installation of the hardware and software had been run on the target system using the target disk.